THE BOOK WORLD.

Trying to Explain the Spiritual Humbug Scientifically.

THE ISLAND OF FIRE

Precious Metals Among the Ancients.

THE LOST GOSPELS.

Growls and Chats About Recent Fiction.

A BUNCH OF NOVELS DISSECTED.

TEN YEARS WITH SPIRITUAL MEDIUMS. By Francis Gerry Fatrneld. D. Appleton & Co. We have been lead by an increasing curiosity to acquaint ourselves with everything that can be classified as the literature of Spiritualism. With equal avidity and ardor we have read volume after volume against and volume after volume for the new anaticism. It is not a little remarkable that a phase of faith which a few years ago was known only as an intermittent fever of past history should claim its millions of adherents, and these not among the poor and illiterate only, but also among the rich and refined. This phenomenon of rapid growth has not yet been satisfactorily explained. It would seem to a casual observe that there must needs be more than more chicanery in a theory which is upheld by Owen and ilds, by Edmonds and Wallace and Crookes. The book before us, however, proves to the entire satisfaction of the author at least, for we very much doubt the effect of his arguments on the average reader, that the deductions of the gentlemen above named are puerile, and that his own scientific explanation, by the vious path of "neurosis of the dormant sort," is the only satisfactory one. If the reader of this volume accepts the author's estimate of himself he will see that he is communing with one of the loftiest intellects that has ever condescended to live among mortals. A writer must be an entire stranger to the rather rare quality of humility or modesty who can dispose of such a man as faine by a single stroke of his pen, and consign his works to oblivion as "superficial and unthought. fol volumes," and who can, in the next breath, accuse Professor Crookes and Alfred R. Wallace of "not a little scientific blundering in their investigations of the phenomena associated with Spirit

Mr. Fairfield's volume is a curiosity in its way. It flatly contradicts the old axiom, "Never solve a mystery by a greater mystery," for the author fairly revels in the darkness which, with laborious hands, he piles on the subject under considera tion. Evidently determined that he will, under no conceivable circumstances, admit that comaccounts for the phenomena by such an intricate and devious method of reasoning that you at last conclude in despair that it is a vast deal easier to swallow Spiritualism whole, table-tippings, phantom hands, materializations and mediums than to understand his explanation of it. What Mr. Fairfield seeks you to believe is, to our mind, infinitely more incredible than anything which the bundest devotee of Spiritualism demands. We have no faith whatever in these modern manifestations, and have on more than one occasion exposed the trickery of so-called mediums; but the interpretation of the matter which the author of this volume gives us is simply the interpretation of twilight by midnight.

ualism."

In the first place he admits-something which we do not propose to ourselves until further inwatch Spiritualism builds. He does not deny the so-called phenomena which have excited the curresity of scholars and unlearned alike. On the other hand, he adds the weight of his own personal testimony to the authenticity of some very startling statements. He says he has twice with nessed the phenomenon of a phantom hand writing messages with a pencil. Let us give the experience in his own words :-

In the first instance, after sitting a few minutes In the first instance, after sitting a few minutes a pencii. I fook a lead pencii from my vest pocket and held it in my hand. No pelson present was within four feet of the centre table, upon which lay seve all sheets of letter paper. Presently a lumin ous vapor appeared hovering over the feach. It did not seem to come from anywhere in the room, but to lorning admaily in its place from invisible materials. The nebulary stage had not lasted in excess of two seconds when the lurat began to die out at the base, and a flumy, semi-iransparent hand and arm gradually frew out of it, like a transformation of the nebula itself. Taking the pencil from my hand, the apparition douted foward the table and wrote on one of the loose sheets, "I have done this tent all present may know that I am a spirit."

This was certainly a very remarkable experience. Had it happened to an ordinary human being it would have afforded conclusive evidence of the truth of Spiritualism. When we ourselve witness anything of the kind we shall stand shoulder to shoulder with the rank and file of Spiritualists and begin at once "fight mit Sigel." But Mr. Fairfield was not so affected. He thought he could account for the incident on principles thoroughly scientific. He tells us that "the nerve-ether proceeding from the person of a medium is susceptible of condensation into a neugla, then into a phantom." Again he says that "this hervous atmosphere is correlated with beht, and suscents. bie of transformation into imminous cloud-, into spectral apparitions and other objective phenom ena." To our minds the explanation is the most

incredible part of the whole matter. But the robust logic of the writer is not disturbed by a severer test than this. Let us again

quote;—
in the summer of 1867, at a pa lor stance given by a wealthy Spiritualist, then resident in Thirtieth street, a laminous nebula hoveled over the plane for a moment, a castade of notes trickled from the keys, as if an invisible hand had swept teem, and then the instrument feit into Mendelssohn's "Midsummer Nights' bream' oversure. There was no one within rix feet of the plane, nor did the closest examination reveal any visible cause for the music. *
In the course of the conversation that copowed the stance, the mession stated to be that he was not a musician and could not possely mave executed the overture, but on inquiry faccertained that our possobs present were acquainted with the piece."

How do you suppose Mr. Fairfield accounts for all this? Way, in the simplest way possible. He

It was a little mysterious to me at that date, I confess; but in the light of later investigation it would not at all singler one it after a similar scenes, I should accertain that betther the medium hor any other person present was acquainted with a piece drawn from the plane apparently by a luminous hebbill; for, knowing from observation the supersuman recollection of previous impressions appertaining to these states of the nervous system. I should only conclude that the medium had heard it at some remove date, and that it may spring up spontaneously under unhaltiral nervous exclusion.

After that nothing under heaven can surprise no. It is so much barder to believe the statement to the last paragrapa than to accept the most preposterous stories of the most fanatical med that we cannot safely predict that Mr. Fairnelds' explanation, it by any stress of the imagination it can be called that, will be generally received as gatisfactory. To us it accuss a marvel that the plane should play at all, and we want a large amount of evidence before we accept the fact as true. But if the time comes when with one own eyes we shall behold that spectacle, is will not be a autisfactory explanation of the mystery that four people in the room are acquainted with the air woich the plane poers out nor do we thrak it nosmble to account for the phenomenon by saying existence (i) had heard the air, and that it had

beneve almost anything, but don't ask so much of us as that. It is too fearfully scientific to be apprehended by the ordinary intellect.

We were not surprised, after the above, to find that Mr. Fairfield regards genius and disease as axin. He tells us blandly that the geniuses o history have all been the victims of hereditary neurosis of the dormant sort. Monammed was subject to epileptic trances; Robespierre was the victim of nervous disorder; Swedenberg was troubled in the same way. The matter with Scott, Dickens, Poe, Hawthorne and Victor Hugo was "a larvated form of nervous perversion." The truth is, there is nothing half so sweet in life as an attack of epilepsy. To be a genius one must be the victim of nervous perversion. If you have a mail quentity of hereuitary neurosis in your system your future is secure; but if you are healthy,

We have read this little book with interest, but without accepting one statement in ten. author may have arrived at a scientific explanation of the phenomena of modern Spiritualism out let us pray that he has not done so, for the explanation is so much worse than Spiritualism and so much harder to understand that we should fear a fatal cerebral excitation as the result.

THE ISLAND OF FIRE. By Rev. P. C. Headley. Boston: Lee & Shepard. A great deal has been said about Iceland lately, and the expedition to the millennial jublice of last August has awakened a new interest in a spot which one shivers to think of, but which seems to be heated by an inexhaustible amount of combustion, which uses Hecla as a kind of chimney through which to emit its smoke and cinders. Mr. Headley's book is very evidently a hasty pro duction, and not the result of long-continued and patient study. One gets the impression that it was written, not so much because the subject lay heavily on the author's heart and must be put into print, even at a pecuniary loss, but rather because the times suggested that some such book would find a ready sale. It will not, therefore, have any especial value as a work of reference, but will undoubtedly subserve a purpose by giving to the general reading public a pleasantly written account of an island which is surrounded by romance and icebergs.

By the way, can it be possible that the tabulated thermometric changes are given correctly by Mr. Headley? Have we not always said, from youtn up, as we shivered in the coldest day of the season, "as cold as Iceland?" And has not Iceland been the synonym for the superlative degree of cold? Have we not imagined the citizens of that far off realm bundled up in furs, while their blood slowly congested, and the mercury in the thermometer froze solid? Well, we have thrown away a large quantity of sympathy. Iceland enjoys a January temperature higher than our New Yorkers have had during the last month. Mr. Headley says:-

So extravagant are the ideas of many of the climate that we copy a page from a journal of the year 1810, which gives the daily temperature of weather for the month of January of one of the severest whiters ever known on the island, when leebergs so bejesquered it that the open sea could not be seen from the tops of the highest accessible inpunitains.

Then follows for January 1 a record of 44 degrace, for January 2, 43 degrees, &c. These were the two warmest days of the month; while on the 25th the mercury fell to 8 degrees, which was the coldest day of the season. During most of the month the mercury stood at 36 and 37 above zero, a degree of cold which can easily be endured with a good overcoat. It is a little curious that we New Yorkers would be the gainers by exchanging our mentas of January and February for the ordinary Januaries and Februaries of Iceland, and that this year, at least, we have suffered more with pitter cold than our far-off neighbors generally do at the same season. It was not because of the cold there, but rather the poverty of the soll, that the unfriendly Danes used to say, "God made the rest i the world, but the devil made leeland,"

The island contains about 40,000 square miles of territory, three-fourths of which remain an uninhabited solitude. Here the thunder of convulsions and of the fall of the avalanche, with the wair of the raven's wing, are the only sounds that break the slience of a smoking waste of mountains, chasms, caverns, lakes and rivers.

In 885 Floki Rafua, a descendant of the founder of Norway, was seized with a desire to emigrate He, gathered his family and flocks together, and embarked. But, accustomed as ho was to roughing it, his brave heart sank within him during the second winter of his stay, and, thoroughly homesick, he started for fatherland. He called the inhospitable spot Island, waten in

his own tongue was Icaland. In 870 ingolf, threatened with vengeance by the kindred of a man whom he had slain, spent a winter in Iceland and liked It so well that on his return to Norway he raised a colony for the purpose of a permanent settlement of the island. His enterprise was a success, and in the course of 100 years lectand was a flourishing Republic, with its Althing, or general assembly, and its Kvidr, or trial by jury.

The pictures of domestic life which Mr. Headley presents are very attractive. These far off Islan ders seem to have just notions concerning the important conditions of social order. They are a people of happy temperament, hardy in body, thoroughly courageous, and hospitable to a degree. Everybody must have an education in Icciand. The school year is from October to the end of May, and during that term compulsory education is enforced.

We have enjoyed this book, and commend it to the good will of our readers,

MANUFACTURING ARTS IN ANCIENT TIMES. By James Napier, F. R. S. E., &c., &c. London: Hamilton, Adams & Co.

This is an interesting and instructive book While its author is not a scholar of the rarer sort, he is so eminently practical and so painstaking with the topic he is discu-sing that you follow him without a suspicion and become biassed in favor of his deductions. Mr. Napier has had many years' experience in matters relating to metal lurgy, and has evidently given a great deal of careful study to those passages of Scripture in which the various metals are mentioned. His first chapter is on gold and silver, and we confess to a very strong temptation to break the commandment waich forbids covetousness, when he describes the vast quantities of these precio metals which apparently could be had for the asking in the ancient time. How it makes the ordinary North American heart beat with envi to read that "it is traditionally related that when the Phonicians visited they lound the silver in such abundance that they not only loaded their ships to the water's edge, but made their common utensils and even suchars of this metal." Taink of sliver ground tackle for a modern yacht! And the luscious consciousness of standing at the tiller of a three-masted coasting solid silver. The consequent wealth of some of the ancient heroes passes the comprehension of the Saxon intellect. Haman, the favorite of the Persian King, who was bent on the destruction of the Jows, quietly said to the King one day, "If it please the sing, let it be written that they may be destroyed; I will pay 10,000 talents of silver to the hands of those that have charge of the business to oring it into the King's treasures." This is one of the first lastances of bribery on record. Haman must have had a not temper, and a very large in come, since the sum rejerred to would amount in modern coisage to something like \$15,000,000. All this for the pleasure of butchering the Jews,

Tee immease quantities of the precious metals which were used in these produgal days is shown

by the ollowing passage from Herodotus:-And there belongs to the temple in Babylon an-other shrine, where stands a large golden image of the god, and near it is placed a large golden table, and the pedestal and throne are gold; and, as the Chaldeans ray, losse tungs were made for soo talents of gold. And there was at that time a statue of twelve cuints of solid gold.

No wonder it excited the envy of all who saw it. Darras Hystaspes wanted it, but did not dare to take it. Xerxes baa'no such foolish scruptos, for he conficated it at once and slew the priest who

The ability of the ancients to work in precious metals is well proven by this further entract from

the same writer :--

also in it many private offerings. These offers made by individuals, consisting of statues, sets, cups and cacred vessels of massy gold. been reproduced by nervous excitement. We can sentrated a property of minience value. On the top

Juno and Rhea. The first was forty feet high and weighed 1,000 talents. The statue of Rhea was of the same weight: the goddess was seated on a golden throne, with Hons at each knee and two sergents of silver. The statue of Juno was erect, like that of Jupiter, weighing 800 talents. She grasped a serpent by the head with her right hand, and held in her left a sceptre enriched with gems.

In the abundant ornaments of the temple was metal enough to pay our national debt, almost, and our only wonder is that we have not the oppormnity, like Xerxes, to coin it into engles.

The remaining chapters are on Bronze, Tin, Iron. Dyeing and Noah's Ark, the last being some what fauctiul and by no means equal in interest to the others. The book is a pleasant one to read, and valuable, not only to the biblical student. in whose behalf it was written, but also to the general scholar.

GETTING ON IN THE WOBLD. By William Mathews, Ll. D. Chicago; S. C. Griggs & Co. THE GREAT CONVERSERS AND OTHER ESSAYS. BY William Mathews, Ll. D. Chicago; S. C. Griggs & Co.

These two volumes constitute a healthy and rigorous contribution to the literature of the day. At a time when so many books of scientific research, and such numberless novels, good, bad and indifferent, come from the press, is something of a relief to get hold of simple, common sense essays like those Mr. Mathews takes such delight in writing. The author's style is clear and pungent, and his way of putting things is very happy. No young man can read his works without being enlightened and encouraged thereby. He is warned not to rely upon genius, but to place dependence on hard and persistent work. He says :- "Inc enormous labor and preparatory training which men undergo for comparatively low and trivial accomplishments should shame the indolent and the supine who are engaged in noble pursuits. A Taglions, to insure the agusty of the evening, rehearses her pironettes again and again, and has to be undressed, sponged and resuscitated ere she is conscious. Handel, the composer, had a barpsichord, every key of which, by incessant practice, was hollowed like the bowl of a spoon. And ye the cry of most dullards, and of many who are not dullards, is, 'It is of no use for me to try to rise; I am not, and never shall be, anybody."

His chapters on Good and Bad Luck, on the Choice of a Profession, on Self-Reliance, on Money, Its Use and Abuse, are simply admirable. They are written in conversational style, and every statement and proposition is enforced by plain logic and homely and ample illustration. No American can read the essay on "Overwork and Underrest" without being made conscious that it contains a warning for himself. Americans never rust, they always wear. They live at such a tension of all the faculties that, when they should b in the prime of life, they have one foot in the grave and

Go to pieces all at once, All at o-ce, and nothing first, Just as bubbles do when they burst.

This tendency to rush trough life is well illustrated in the following blographical notice:-

Menday, I dabbled in stock operations; Tuesday, owned milions by all calculations; Wednesday, my Fifth avenue palace began; Thursday, I drove out a spanking bay span; Friday, I gave a manufecin ball; And cattriay smashed into nothing at all. Mr. Matthews ends his essays with these healthy lines from Schiller :-

What shall I do to be forever known?

This duty every

This did till many who jet, aleep anknown;

Think'at hou, me think that they remain anknown

By angel tromps to beaven their praise is blown—

Living their loi.

The book is printed in clear type, on good paper, and is a credit to the house from which it

The other volume, by the same author, is called the "Great Conversers," for no other reason than that its first essay of forty-three pages is on that subject. It is very pleasantly written and will be read with interest. The chapter on epigrams has particularly attracted our attention. of literature which is well described in the following lines :-

The qualities three that in a bee we meet, in an epigram never should rail. The body should always be liftle and sweet, And a sting should be left in the tail. Various examples of this concentration of wit,

satire and sense are given, but none better or more pungent than the following, written after the death of the famous author of "Hudioras."

While Suder, needy wretch was yet alive,
No generous patron would a dinner give;
see itm, when scarved to death and turned to dust,
Presented with a monumental bust!
The poet's fate is here in emblem shown,
He asked for bread, and he received a stone.

LOST AND HOSTILE GOSPELS. By Rov. S. Baring-Gould, M. A. London: Williams & Norgate. The investigator who has spent any time in trying to find out the origin of the gospels and epis ties which make up the New Testament, and who has surmised that fragments of other perhaps equally authentic gospels might be discovered among the ruins of the first three centuries, will read this little book with real zest and satisfac It is always pleasant to nut yourself trated the energy of years on a single disputed point. The source and critical of Mr. Baring-Gould will not questioned by any one who is acquainted with the works that have previously come from his pen. The enthusiasm with which he enters the domain of fletion, tradition and truth, all jumbled together and making a chaos fearful to henold, and the perseverance with which he follows a trail after he has once scented it, draws

largely on your respect and confidence. The differences between the aporties who remained at Jerusalem to lound a Christian Church in the very beart of the Henrew theocracy, and the stordy apostle to the Contiles, are made very plain indeed. We have all been disappointed that there was so little barmony between these two branches of the same spiritual organization; but the facts of the case are brought forward with such care and cogency that we are no longer surprised that James and Paul should have fallen into a misunderstanding which only the mild and

loving spirit of St. John could bridge over. The author traces the origin of the gospel of the Behrews, the Clementine gospel and what are called the lost Pauline gospels, and one can hardly suppress a sigh that so many invaluable manuscripts should have been lost sight of. embarrassed by traditions and tables that have little weight, there must have been much that let a side lightin on the life both of the apostles and o the Master. The few extracts which are gathered from the writings of the early lathers, passages that are quoted by way of illustration and attrit uted to these lost gospels, give one a raging and ungovernable appears for more. Some of them are so contradictory to the spirit of the New Testament that a Sanday school scholar would see that they are not while others are so exquisite in senti ment and so similar to the general style of the Lord that one accepts them without a question. For instance, Origen quotes this passage, probably from the gospel of the Hebrews: 'Jesus said, 'For the sake of the wenk I became weak; for the sake of the bung y I hungered; for the sake of the thirsty I telested. 177 Tols saying is so beautiful and so illustrative of the spirit of our Lord that we are ready to believe in its gen niness. Again, these words are quoted by both Clement and Origon:-"Seek those things that are great and little things will be added to you; and seek ye heavenly things and the things of this

The book is of exceeding interest to the theological student and will be read by the ordinary scholar with more than usual delight. The style of the writer is clear and forcible, and one reads on and on, scarce knowing how fast he is travelling, until at last, to his surprise, he comes to the word "ginis."

CHATS ABOUT NOVELS.

The growler read "Ralph Wilton's Weird" (Henry Hote & Co.) from cover to cover, and then he said it down, while a smile expressive of both defeat and satisfaction spread Itself over his face. "There is nothing to find fault with in that book," he said with a sign of regret. Knowing what a terrible sacrifice this concession must have been to one triend we restrained the Impulse to shout, "A victory at last?" "Raish Willoa's Weird" to is a perfect lewel of its kind. It is written by Mrs.

Alexander, author of "The Wooing O't," which appeared also in the Leisure Hour series. There are very few characters in the book, but these lew are drawn by an artiste's hand, Ralph Wilton is, of course, the hero. He is a colonel in Her Majesty's service and a man who, though of the world, sowed but a small crop of wild oats and had little to regret in his past life. He is heir to the title of Lord St. George and to the old man's money if, when he marries, he will chose a bride from among the flower of the aristocracy. Wilton makes no rash promises for he is very much of the opinion that he will end his days an old bachelor. L'homme propose et Dieu dispose! In the first chapter he meets his fate in a ratiroad carriage. The young lady, whom he afterward learns is a Miss Ella Rivers, is the sole occupant of his compartment, and he lends her his plaid to sleep in. They have little or no conversation until a smashoccurs and then the gallant Colonel can do no less than take the unprotected girl under his care. He ascertains toat she is going to the same part of Scotland in which his shooting box is situated.

Elia is the drawing teacher to the heir of Sir Peter Fergusson, a poor deformed boy, who is de-pendent for his happiness upon her society. Wilton is invited to Sir Peter's and goes there hoping to meet Ella, not that he cares for her at all, on, no! only she is pretty and interested him. Sir Peter's family is not one to be too friendly with a person in Ella's position, so it is a long time pelore Wilton meets her. After a while he manages to throw himself in her way occasionally and finds, to his surprise, that he is in love with the girl. He reasons with himself about it, but to no purpose. She, on the other hand, feels nothing but friendship for him, and when he tells his tale of love she is completely taken by surprise. Even then she has to confess that she is not touched by the divine passion. She talks to him with the most charming natveted that only fans the fire in his breast to an unquenchable flame. In the end-but why should we tell what Mrs. Alexander tells so much better? The plot of this delightful story is very slight, it is the well chosen language and perfect naturalness of the book that gives the charm. "THE RAINBOW CREED,"

"The Rainbow Creed" (William F. Gill & Co.) has made the growler himself again. "You call this a novel ?" he huses in our ear. "What an idea. 'The Anxious Inquirer' would not be a bad title for it. There is very little sugar coating about this book and one does not have to read far to get the dritt." It is useless to interrupt this trasciple gentleman when he is relieving his mind, so we held our peace till he had done and then quietly suggested that if he nad read the preface he would have at once seen the aim of the and save himself an uncalled-for growi. "The Rainbow Creed" calls itself "a story of the times." It is hardly a novel, for it has about as much plot as a tract. It is just what it professes to be-s means of showing to the world the va rious creeds of Christian denominations and their unchristian representatives. Some of the ministers described are said to be drawn from the life. and as Huberton evidently means Boston it must be interesting to the people of that city to guess which is which. The principal character of the book, Malcolm Lawson, is a doubting divinity student, who becomes reconcited to his calling in the end; but he goes through the valley of tribulation before he sees the light. The author of this volume has taken great precaution to keep his name hidden from public knowledge, and speculation is rife on the subject. In the meantime the book is widely read and variously commented upon. In general outline it is similar to "Victor Latourette," but it has not the literary ability of that book. It is not, however, without a certain officandedness that always insures popularity.

"SONGS OF OUR YOUTH." Our talented young friend, Miss Sotto Voce, is quite enthusiastic over Miss Mulochis new departure. She kept us by the piano for a whole evening while sae sung through the "Songs of Our Youth" (Harper & Bros.). Miss Voce said that Miss Clara Louise Kellogg had sung "Summer Wind," "The Sky at Night," "To the North Wind" and "Pretty Polly Oliver," and pronounced them superior music. Our young friend was fortunate enough to hear the distinguished prima donna in private, a privilege only accorded to a select lew. "Pretty Poly Oliver," which is old English. The collection is selected with great taste, so far as the

The songs mentioned are all Swedish, except music goes, but the words are often very ordinary. "The Sky at Night" is almost equal to Schumann. The music is simple and passionate, out it is hard to sing with the right expression, for the words do not mean anything. Taken as a whole the volume is a treasure. The songs are of a vastly higher order than one is ant to find in song books. Those from the Swedish are the bear, They are quaint and original, and will be a valuable acquisition to the music of the day.

RICH MEDWAY. "Rich Medway" (G. W. Carleton & Co.) is a tale of American life among everyday sort of people, in Connecticut. Rich Medway is the pero and a pretty nice sort of fellow, popular among his own as well as the fairer sex. He is rather divided in his mind between two young ladies, Miss Vesta Heain and Miss Snattuck. Not knowing which is the most pleased with his attentions ne is turned by a straw and proposes to one, whom he imagines rejects him. Tuen be tries No. 2, and she tells him that she is already married. This is somewhat of a damper, but he does not break his neart about it. No. 1 in the meantime goes to Europe, where she stays for three years, There are a number of characters introduced into the book of more or less interest. Jack Hilton and Kitty Medway are a jolly couple, even after they become man and wife. the heroine, is a young lady who travels on her intelled. You should hear her discussing the poets. Rich, who makes no protensions to literary tastes, asks her in an off-hand way if she likes lennyson, to which she replies that she does not: many people like an author who happens to be lamous, and he being Poet Laureate and, naving attained to the highest round of the ladder of fame, finds plenty to fall down and worship him. These considerations do not weigh with me at all." Her lover is said to have expressed great admiration for the honesty and indepen dence of her opinion. The young lady, encour aged by her listener's attention, continues:--"I do not think he is to be compared to Scott, Moore, Byron, &c., of the past, or Owen Meredith and opr own Longfellow, Bryant or Holland, of the present. I have read much poetry, ancient and mod ern, and enjoy it as I do no other form of literature; but there is nothing in Tennyson that finds an answering chord in my heart. Some of his pest sentiments are spoiled by unmusical repetitions, and he has written so much that really seems to me to amount to nothing at all." Her lover is a little awed by this talk, and ventures to say, www. lady wouldn't dare to say that of the popu "Possibly; out I have read much and thought more, and enquor consent to confine my opinions to the received standard of merit." Such frankness is charming in one so young, and the lover is duly impressed, Holikes a girl who tainks for nerself, and possibly will think for him to time to come.

The story is made interesting by local allusions, for it is always pleasant to be able to recall the scenes one reads about.

"HABRY BLOUND,"

Good books for boys are so rare nowadays that we hall with delight Panip Gubert Hamerton's "Harry Blount" (Roberts Brothers), an advance copy of which hes before us. Story writing to hardly in Mr. Hamerton's line and this volume has more faults than those he writes for "grown ups." However, its tone to healthy and quiet and the style attractive. Harry Blount is a very named boy, seither a saint nor a sinner. His adventures on land and sea are not imposible and are very graphically old. Mr. merton's artistic touch is readily recognized. Sometimes he gets beyond the depth of the average boy, but not often enough to be disagrecable. Harry goes to school, as every clythized boy should, but does not hurt himself with study. The book he prefers is the book of nature; that he studies wolf. Boating, hunting, batt playing, any amusement that can be sud in

prairies! Harry is befriended by an "excellent | two and then lost consciousness. They carried young man" by the name of Calveriey, who takes him yacuting and plays mentor to the boy. Although considerable of a prig Caiverley evidently means well. To be sure, he talks fike a tutor to his young friend, but that is a small sin. The scene where Harry and young Greenfield are adriit on the Atlantic, the sole occupants of the yacht Alaria, is cleverly painted. It is not often that a man descends from Mr. Hamerton's height to write a book for boys, and still less often does he attain the success that is acmeved in "Barry

"THE BLOSSOMING OF AN ALOE."

The Growler does not think much of "The Blos-

oming of an Aloe," (Harper & Brothers), but then you know what an unreasonable fellow he is. Mrs. Cashel Hoey's novel differs very little from the average novel of the period, except in the fact that it is perfectly sweet and clean. Anne Cairnes is the heroine and is the only daughter of a very respectable man, who made his money in trade. She lives on a bit of property adjoining that of Sir Alexander Mervyn, with waose daughter she is very intimate. The daughter gets marbook. Old Lady Mervyn is quite foud of Anne, and as she is as poor as she is proud she determines to make a match netween the heiress and her son, David Mervyn, "of ours." But David has no such thought. The truth is he has a wife already. He married a poor girl that he loved, but has not yet had the courage to tell his mother. Lady Mervyn is not a woman to inspire confidences from a romantic boy, and old father is in such a delicate state of health that the shock would be his deathblow. So David buries his secret deep in his own breast. time he determines to tell Anne Cairnes all about it, as she is his good friend and a strong, brave girl, but for some reason he postpones the evil day and goes with his regiment to the Crimea. His wife and baby spend some time near hastings, where Anne Cairnes meets them and makes a water color sketch of the mother (now those English girls are with their brush, to be sure), though she has no idea that the woman, who goes by the name of Martin, is David's wi/e Ah, if she had only known! Mrs. Martin or Mervyn leaves Hastings and returns to London, where she hears that David has been mortally wounded. and she dies from the shock.

in the meantime Lady Mervyn learns David's secret and comes down to London to upbraid probably, but the poor woman is dead before she gets there. She then hires a woman to take the cuild and bring her up as her own. As the woman is taking the little Lucy home she is killed in a railroad accident, and it is given out that the child is killed also. Lady Mervyn feels like a murderess for a time, but she soon shakes off that uncomfortable feeling. "I should think she might feel like one," says the Growler.

Anne Cairnes, who, by the way, is the aloe, nurses the fire in her breast and settles herself down to the life of an old maid. She knows nothing of David's early marriage. Instead of petting a parrot or a cat she takes the orphaned gaughter of Mrs. Allen- an old pensioner of hers-to bring up, which is a much more sensible plan. Fifteen years have dragged by, and David-now Sir David-returns home from India, bringing Cyril Westland, Anne's nephew, back with him. Cyri at once falls in love with Miss Allen, who a singularly beautiful girl, and her hand of his aunt Anne. Anne puts him off until she can consult Sir David. The two old folks talk the matter over and Anne tells him what the dving Mrs. Allen told her-viz., that Mary is not her daughter, but that she picked her up, a baby crawling among the rains of a wrecked railroad train, filteen years before. Anne tells all this to Sir David and shows him a ring that was fied around the child's neck. David looks at it and says, "That was my wife's ring;" and then he explains his early marriage to Anne, and after putting two and two together they decide toat Mary, whose real name is Lucy, is his child. Father and daughter have a meeting, which is not described, to the Growler's disappointment, who confesses that he likes to be in at the finding of the straw berry mark. Weat is more natural than that, after the good example set them by Cyril and Lucy, Sir David and Anne should clasp hands over the wasted years? The aloe was a long time in blossoming, but at last it blossomed as the rose.

"VALENTINE AND HIS BROTHER." Story of Valentine and His Brother' (Harper & Bros.) is, in our opinion, the best novel that Mrs. Oliphant has put forth. It has more strength and originality than is usually found in her works. The plot is not particularly startling. You see very soon how it is all going to turn out. It is in the character drawing that the attraction lies. We do not think that there is a really poor character in the book. It is a wonderfully consistent story. Each person is true to himself. Mary Percival is, perhaps, not quite natural; yet upon they are not interesting. She was only a wreck : her life had been robbed of its sweetness by

"It is not often that a novelist can approach so near to the sensational without touching opon it. It would have been so easy for Mrs. Oliphant to have made her story melodramatic. She had all the material at hand; yet she arose superior to the temptation," says the Growler, who has not

been quite himself of late. The gypsy woman, Forest Myra, gives the color to the book. It is a little singular how a man who developed as old Richard Ross could ever have done so impulsive a thing as was his marriage with the gypay girl. Whether he would have continued to love her if she had been satisfied to have passed her life with him in the realms of civilization is a question. The book does not pretend to explain how the singular marriage come about; it only deals with its results-Valentine and his brother. The description of poor Myra's entrance into the village in the rain, with her two boys clinging to her gown, her struggle with herself as to which of the two she should resign to his noble grandparents, is very pathetic. But there is old Lord and Lady Eskside for their vagrant grandchild, who is brought to their door in the peiting rain. How many high-born dames would have augged the little fellow in all his mud and wet to their shining satin bosoms ? As the little Val grew in strength and beauty the old folks lived their life over again. But the father was not so well pleased. He had set aside the memory of his boy nood's love and devoted himself to the collection of old china and the study of diplomacy.

Val was a noble boy and grew into a noble man. There was just enough gypsy blood in him to give him a reitsh. And Dick, the boy who stayed with his tramp mother, he had less of the gypsy in him than had Val. but he was none the less dear to the woman for that, It was a day of days fo ner when her poor Dick and her rich, handsome gs a lord's grandson. How hard it must have been to her not to fold him in her arms again! No, she conquered the longings of her heart and watched nim from afar. And how Dick loved the generous tellow who paid him so well for keeping his boat; little did he think that they were twir brothers. What a beautiful picture the gypsy mother made as she stood on the river straining her great, black eyes after her gentleman son, and how her heart went out to Dick, who had been with her in all her wanderings! It was nard for the tramp woman to settle herself down and live under a roof, but she did it for Dick's sake and to be near ner other boy.

Of course the truth comes to light at last; but low quietly they all take it! There is no scene. The gypay woman's heart beats wildly under ner. brown skin; but she has been expecting this end. and does not laint when it comes. It is the most of a surprise to the two boys; but they also take it quietly. The elegant and Hon, Mr. Ross acknowledges his wife before the world; but he does not profess to love her nor she him. Each looks upon the other as a creature of another species -som thing to be avoided. Richard behaves the best, for he is a courtier. They all go into Scotland to the old place at Escende. Myra is never happy again. The stately old house smothers her. Lord and Lady Easside are kindness itself; but their attentions oppress her. One day she is missed from the nouse. Her pore co in search of her, and and her lying, weak and expansied, under the could entity a traine over some of our Western | trees in the forcat. She smiled just mee on the

her home and she died while they stood beside

FRENCH LITERATURE.

SOUVENIRS DE L'HOTEL DE VILLE DE PARIS, by M. Charles Merrnan, is a work of high interest, published under the auspices of M. Flon. The author was formerly Secretary General to the Prefecture of the Seine, and his book is enriched with a map of Paris on which the late Emperor Napoleon traced with his own hands the further improvements in the city which he contemplated when his career was cut short. Some of M. Merrnan's recollections are extremely curious. He tells, for instance, how the provisional government of 1848 had to issue a proclamation one morning reinstating the old major dome of the Hotel de Ville before tradesmen would give them credit for a breakfast; how Louis Napotoon, when President, tried in vain to borrow a few thousand francs, and at length told the officers of his own household that he was literally reduced to \$2; how Marshal Bugeaud, French like, embraced M. Odillon Barrot when the latter was disposed to sede the Premiership to him; how M. Thiers was frightened at the thought that if he became Presdent he should have to wear a military uniform, and many other choice anecdotes.

HISTOIRE DE L'ANGLETERRE, depuis la mort de la Reine Anne jusqu'à nos jours. Par H. Reynald, Labrairie Germer Ballilère.

M. Reynald is a distinguished professor in the Faculty of Letters of Aix. In the compass of 360 pages he has given an admirable sketch of Enghan history during a century and a half of her coustitutional existence. The events which led to the independence of the United States are summarized with especial care, though it is needless to say that American (as well as English) names give M. Reynald a good dear of trouble. Thus an old familiar name has to be guessed under the designation of "Banker's Hill." Suas Deane is honored with an additional "s," and Rutledge with a complimentary "d." Again, it is strange to find the author stating, that George III. named as Secretary for the Colonies "a distinguished officer, Lord Sackville, who had assumed some time since the title of Lord Germaine." Lord George Sackville (such was his proper style) was chiefly "distin ruished" for his disgraceful conduct at Minden Having changed his name, he was now Lord George Germaine, though subsequently created Viscount Sackville, not without murmurs among

BOOKS RECEIVED.

the poers at the elevation to their order of a man

who had incorred the stigma of cowardice.

PROM SENATOR PATTERSON, WASHINGTON, D. C. Acts and Resolutious of the United States of america Passed at the First Session of the Fortythird Congress. Annual Report of the Chief of the Bureau of Sta-

istics, Commerce and Navigation, 1873. United States Geological Survey of Montana, dano, Wyoming and Utab, 1872. Hayden. Report of Explorations and Surveys for a Ship Canal, Isthmus of Darien. Navy Department.

Message and Documents, 1873-74. Commercial Relations, 1873. PROM D. APPLETON & CO., NEW YORK. Astronomy. By J. Rambosson, Beredity; a Psychological Study of Its Phenome ena, Laws, Causes and Consequences. From the

French of Th. Ribot. Natural History of Man. By A. De Quatrefages. Science of Music. By Sedley Taylor. What is atuste? L. L. Rice.

FROM JAMES MULLER & CO., NEW YORK. A History of the Four Georges. By Samuel M. Thinks-I-To-Myself: a Serio-Ludrico, Tragico-

The Romance of a Poor Young Man. By Octave Femillet.

The Epicurean. By Thomas Moore,

Drawing for Young Children. PROM HARPER BROTHERS, NEW YORK. The Story of Valentine and His Brother. By Mrs.

Love's Victory. By B. L. Parjeon.

FROM G. P. PUINAM'S SON, NEW YORK The Maintenance of Health. By J. Milner Fotbergill.

PROM J. A. M'GER, NEW YORK. The Men of '48. By Colonel James E. McGee.

FROM P. O'SUBA, NEW YORK. Criterion; or, How to Detect Error and Arrive

at Truth. By Rev. J. Baimers. FROM SHELDON & CO., NEW YORK. Types and Emblems. A collection of sermone, By C. H. Spurgeon.

FROM E. P. DUTTON & CO., NEW YORK. The Parting Words of Adolph Monod to flis Friends and the Church.

THE DEPARTMENTS.

FIRE COMMISSIONERS.

At a meeting of the Fire Commissioners yesterday, Foreman Joseph Griffith, of Engine Company No. 9, was transferred to the command of the new steamboat William F. Havemeyer, now in process of construction at Camden, N. J., and Intended to crure about the water front of the city for the protection of the wharves and saipping, a duty ow performed by the Faller. The new boat will now performed by the Failet. The new beat win has been for some time in Cainden superintenting her construction, and she will be aumirably fitted for the duties required of her. Benjamin C. Bamptoe was appointed her engineer.

Foreman kee, of Engine Company No. 23, was transferred to No. 9 to full the vacancy caused by the appointment of Foreman Griffia.

THE PARK COMMISSIONERS

held their regular meeting yesterday, but nothing beyond the routine business connected with maintenance was transacted. The Commission is patiently waiting the action of the Legislature, in order that it may enable it to carry out the works by law placed within its charge, and toward which it is now unable to do anything for want of the required funds. President Stebbins yesterday stated to the HERALD representative, that the means at their disposal was never so insided, being barely equal to maintain, and of course nothing could be done in the way of construction. At the same line the domand for labor struction. At the same time the demand for labor was never so great, larve numbers of people being in a suffering condition through enforced idleness. Meantime the necessary arrangaments are being made to place the parks and other places under their control in thorough order.

CHARITIES AND COBRECTION. At the meeting of the Commissioners of Chart-

ties and Correction held yesterday the invitation of Manager Samuel H. Hurd, the philanthropic anager of Barnum's Hippodrome, to the children on Randail's Island to attend a performance at that place of amusement, was considered and accepted for Priday afternoon next. The children, numbering some 600, will be brought to the foot of Twenty-sixth affect on that day by the steamer Believing, whence the older boys will march to the the tollowing resolution, waich

acopted;—
Resolved, That the thanks of this Board be and are bereby extended to Mr. Mord, manager of Baronan's hippodrome, for his generous invitation to the chiefeed of managing legisle to witness the performance in that evenus on Freiny atternoon cest.

MEETING OF POLICE BOARD. The Board of Police Commissioners held a short session yesterday afternoon, transacting unim-

portant routine business. The following were appointed patrolmen:-Emit King, John Franc, James Ricin, Aibert liced, Otto Keiz and James Reddy.

A communication was received from the Chief Engineer of the Santary Board reporting the sale condition of the bohers of the Poice boat Soncea, the same having been renaired and a resolution ordering atom to be again used on it was adopted.

ST. PATRICK'S GRAVE.

(From the Pall Mall Gazette, March 04.7 We are informed that Mr. Mulholland, a large landed proprietor in the neighborhood of Downpacrick, ireland, is about to elect in that city a memorial to commemorate the good deeds permemorial to commemorate the good deeds pertermed by the patron said of freland, St. Patrick.
Ar. Heary Frement drew attention some time
since to the disgraceful condition in which the
reduced grave of the said was kept, and suggested
that a pholic sucception should be raised with
the view of freeding a suitable monument. It is,
we understand. Mr. Authoriand sintention to beat
the whole coat of the work.